

### Effect of *Abhyanga* on *Vaatvridhi*: A Case Study

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#### Abstract

Ageing is a process of physical, psychological and social change in multi dimensional aspects. The World population of the old persons is rising and it is estimated that up to the year 2050, persons having age more than 65 years will reach up to 1/5th of the global population. In our country older persons more than 65 years are of 3.8% of the population. It is postulated that by the year 2050 tentative number of old persons in our country will be around 113 million. Previously the emerging predisposing cause of morbidity and death throughout the world was communicable diseases but now days the cause is shifting to non-communicable diseases<sup>1</sup>. *Ayurveda* has mentioned three different biological variations of *Tridosha* with relation to three certain factors like *Vaya* (age), *Ahoratra* (diurnal variation), and *Bhuktam* (meals). One has to take care that there should not be imbalance in constitution of *Dosha*. Improper life style and diet habit results in vitiation of *Dosha* resulting in *Dosha vridhhi*. *Vriddhavastha*(Geriatric stage) is one of suitable area for hosting *Vaatadosha* to accumulate and grow. *Dourbalya*(generalized weakness), *Malavibandh* (constipation), *Pralaap* (irrelevant talk), and *Nidranash* (insomnia) are certain manifestations of *Vaatvridhi*. There is no significant and safe treatment in modern science to overcome situation because of limitations. *Ayurveda* is useful in such condition due to its safe and soothing approach. Ideal guidelines suggested in *Dinacharya* (daily life style) plays key role in overcoming senile complaints. *Abhyanga*, a pattern of gentle massage of oil on overall body helps to normalize vitiated *Vaata*. A case of elderly person with age 85 years got relived from his complaints by induction of *Abhyanga*. This article will elaborate on a conceptual study on therapeutic utility of *Abhyanga* in *Vaatvridhi*.

#### Keywords

*Vaatvridhi, Abhyanga, Nidranash, Pralaap, Vibandh*



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## INTRODUCTION

Geriatric stage is unavoidable change in human life; it is a spontaneous process with respect to time factor. Many more changes happens in such stage such as functional, sentimental and social. Population of elderly person is increasing day by day and it is estimated that in future old age is a main predisposing factor of disease as compare to communicable one. As old age is a victim of different disabilities.

Modern science has described ageing as most alarming emerging condition to be attended. Changes occur at this stage on different levels such as Physiological, behavioural and social. Skin becomes loose and wrinkles are formed dark pigmentation can be observed on skin; nails become thick and gray in colour, onset of tremors in arms, head, neck, jaws are also seen. Due to weakening in controlling mechanisms old people easily detect temperature variation and change in climate, they suffer digestive problems like flatulence and constipation Neurological complaint like posture change and imbalance are commonly seen. Psychological complaints like sleeplessness, senile dementia a group of symptoms like improper memory, intolerance to change, disorientation and excitement, failure to

decide, incidence of delusion and hallucination, extreme mental depression and severe mental clouding that is the confusion and depleted working stamina arrives as a result of old age. Due to atrophy changes in sensory nervous system visual disturbance, hearing impairment, improper sensation of touch, smell occurs and pattern of phonetics of words gets changed. Due to all facts mentioned above they become dependent and get underestimated and neglected.<sup>2</sup>

As per Ayurveda elderly persons are victim of *Vaatvridhi* with major complaints like *Karshya* (thinness of body due to mal nourishment), *Karshnya* (pigmentation of skin), *Usnhakamitva*, (urge for hot things), *Kamp* (tremors) , *Aanaha* (flatulence) , *Shakritgraha* (constipation and hard stool), *Bala*, *Varna*, *Nidra Indriya bhrinsh* (debility, pallor, insomnia, improper perception of sense organs) *Pralaap* (delirius talk), *Bhrama* (vertigo) *Dinata* (feeling of helplessness)<sup>3</sup>. Additional signs like *Gatrasfurana*(muscular spasm), *Sandnyanash*(sensory loss), *Asthishool*(pain in bones), *Majjashosh* (neural degeneration) , *Bhaya* (fear), *Shoka* (panic tendency) , were mentioned in different compendium.

In modern science there are so many limitations to overcome problems of elderly due to drug side effects and contraindications; as old persons already suffer from different metabolic diseases and are under multiple drug therapy. This will give rise to wrong and unhealthy consequences that is why physician approaches for safe remedy.

*Ayurveda* is a science which deals with preventive aspects rather than curative approach. Different therapeutic applications like *Abhyanga*, *Vyayama* (exercise) , *Nasya* (medicated nasal drops) , *Anjana* (medicated eye drops) , *Udvertana* (rubbing body with medicated powder) , *Karnapurana* (medicated ear drops) are different modes which helps to retain health. A detailed protocol has been mentioned in order to prevent possible hazards of *Doshavikruti*. As discussed above *Vatvridhhi* (vitiation of *Vaatdosha*) with different manifestations can be overcome by *Ayurvedic* approach.

An old man with age of 85 years was brought to our OPD with primary complaint of debility, constipation, delirious talk and insomnia for last one month. After having detailed clinical examination; signs and symptoms confirms diagnosis of

*Vaatvridhhi*. Relatives were convinced to undergo patient *Abhyanga* procedure with certain medicines and life style alteration. After few days patient gradually got partial relief from certain complaints and complete relief regarding problem of insomnia, weakness, constipation and delirious talk with certain positive changes in different parameters. How *Abhyana* helps to overcome *Vaatvridhhi* with its potential is discussed below.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To assess the effect of *Abhyanga* in *Vaatvridhhi* with special reference to geriatric changes.
- To have a detailed elaborative discussion on probable action of *Snehadravya* especially *Tila taila* (*Seasum Indicum*) on *Abhyanga vidhi*.

Material and Method:

Material: *Abhyanga* table, *Tila taila*, cotton swabs ,hot water utensil.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### A Case Report:

After having detailed review of patient it was clear that there was no response to available modern treatment. He was having longstanding past history of hypertension

and diabetes with good socioeconomic status.

After having clinical examination of patient with all respects of classical aspect of Ayurveda; he was diagnosed as a case of *Vaatvridhhi*. Systematic discussion of same is follows (Table no 1.)

Complaints like *Dainya*, *Shoka*, *majjashosha*, *Bhramawere* not found with patient. Considering all above majority of signs diagnosis was confirmed as *Vaatvridhhi* (Table no. 2)

**Table 1** The signs and complaints of patient were observed and analyzed

Sr. No.	Signs and Symptoms	Co related with Ayurvedic term
1	Generalized weakness	<i>Balabhrunsh</i>
2	Constipation	<i>Shakritgruha</i>
3	Fullness of abdomen	<i>Aadhmana</i>
4	Excessive irrelevant talk	<i>Pralaap</i>
5	Insomnia	<i>Nidrabhrunsh</i>
6	Discoloration below eyebrow and grey, dry nails	<i>Karshnya</i>
7	Appearance with head covered by woollen cloth, wearing sweater demand of hot tea and fresh food is confirmed by asking questions	<i>Usnakamitva</i>
8	Visible tremors in arm ,neck, and head	<i>Kampa</i>
9	Irrelevant uttering and orientation by asking frequent question and confused answers to asked questions showing restlessness and memory loss.	<i>Smruti and Indriya Bhrunsh Moha</i>

**Table 2** Patients Individual Parameters

Particulars	Observations
<i>Prakriti</i>	<i>Kaphavataj</i>
Pulse	96/min, thin in touch.
Blood Pressure	160/90mm of Hg
CVS	Normal
RS	Breathlessness after a short exertion
Per Abdomen	Fullness, hyper resonant sound heard.
Stool	Constipation, occasional with hard evacuation.
Urine	Occasional incontinence.

### 3) Treatment Advised:

#### a) In the form of Food and Regime:

Patients relatives were convinced to give regular follow ups. A diet schedule was planned containing either a plate of *Upma*, *Sheera*, *Paratha* with ample ghee, fresh fruit like *Dadimba*, or Apple was suggested for breakfast. A warm freshly cooked food *Pathykar* (wholesome) in nature was suggested with adequate use of ghee, moongdaal, chapati, and a *Fal shaak* (fruit vegetable) were arranged for meals. At evening food like *Khichadi* formed by mixture of rice and moongdaal with adequate amount of ghee were advised.

Care was taken regarding liquid as it should be hot. Tea was substituted by buffalo milk; it was advocated that clothes should be warm and head must be muffled by woollen cloth. Temperature of surroundings was maintained to maintain temperature warm. Hot water was indicated for brushing, for cleaning after evacuation and for bath.

#### b) Treatment Applied:

After having a confirm diagnosis of *Vaatvridhhi* a specific treatment of *Abhynga* was finalized to apply as follows:

- As *Tila taila* is easily available and affordable potent *Vaatshamak* oil; it was selected for *Abhynga*.
- Daily in the morning within 8am to 9 am patient was induced for *Abhynga*.
- Soothing warm oil was applied and care was taken that temperature of oil was maintained warm by keeping oil utensil in hot water.
- Minimum 5 to 6 minutes were allotted to each part of body for massage.
- It was insisted that; at the time of massage on parts of body like *Shira* (head) , *Karnapali* (ear lobule), *Talahasta, Talapada*, ( surface of palm and foot) were more stressed for massage. Such practice was followed.

- At the time of *Shiroabhynga* (gentle massage on scalp) vital regions like *Utkshap marma* (centre of fore head) , *Apanga* (eye lateral) , *shankha* ( temporal region) were delicately massaged in order to enhance penetration of oil. Gentle massage of all sinus surface, and whole face was done. Whole practice was done for 15to20 minutes.

- Upper limbs and lower limbs were massaged for 10 minutes each and stress was given on palms.
- On abdominal surface cloak wise round directional massage movement was induced around umbilicus. For chest region along with direction of thoracic cage and intercostals space oil was rubbed on chest.
- On back region as per direction of vertebral column oil was massaged in short circular patterns in lower direction from cervical to lower lumbar region.
- After conclusion of massage patient was allowed to sit comfortably for 15 minutes in order to enhance absorption of oil.
- Later on patient was suggested for bath with comfortable hot water.
- *Gandherva Haritaki Choorna* 5gram in quantity was administered orally at night with hot water for relief from constipation.

- Such treatment was given for fifteen days.

### Discussion regarding efficacy of *Abhyanga* procedure:

- *Abhyanga* is unique recommended regime for daily lifestyle. It is mentioned that regular practice of *Abhyanga* is useful to overcome situations like *Jara* (geriatric problems), *Shrama* (relief in fatigue), *Vaat nashaka* (pain relieving action), *Drishtrikara* (minor eye problems were ruled out), *Prasadkara* (feeling of satisfaction in sense organs and mind), *Ayupushtikara* (prolonging age), *Swapnakara* (induces sleep), and *Sutwaktardhyakara* (nourishes skin and retains its health)<sup>4</sup>.

- Whenever there is reference of *Taila* is mentioned it can be considered as *Tila taila*.<sup>5</sup>

- Properties of *Tila taila* are as it is *Marutghna* (relieves *Vaat dosha* vitiation), *Shleshamavardhana* (*Kaphavardhan* antagonistic action to *Vaatvridhhi*), *Twachyam* (nourishes to skin maintains elasticity), *Ushnam* (being hot in tendency), *Sthirkaram* (helps to maintain proper gait of body constitution) and *Yonivishodhanam* (cleans abnormalities of female genitals) in function.<sup>6</sup>

- *Dalhana* has mentioned *Matra* (specific unit of time) span up to which *Abhyanga* can be applied for proper penetration in different regions. Within a span of 300 *matra* (approximately 65 second) oil will enter in skin via hairs; it will reach to *Rakta* within 500 *matra* (approximately 160 seconds); (within 190 seconds) or 600 *matra* it reaches to *Mansa Dhatu*; like wise 700 *matra*/ 228 seconds are required to reach in *Meda*; 800 *matra*/240 seconds are required to approach *Asthi* and finally 900 *matras* or approximately 285 seconds are required to get entry in *Majjadhatu*. This indicates that approximately 5 minutes are sufficient for massaging each part of body.<sup>7</sup>

- *Charaka* has told that Skin is location of *Vaata* and *Sparshanindriya* it is recommended of daily Practice of *Abhyanga*.<sup>8</sup>

- *Susruta* has explained additional properties of *Tila taila* like *Ushna*, *Tikshana*, (high penetrating capacity) *madhur rasa*, *Madhur Vipaka*, *bhrinhan* (improves health), *prinan*, *Vyavayi* (acts before metabolism), *Sukshama*, *Vishada* (cleans internal channels) *Guru*, *Saram*, *Vrishyam*, *Twakprasadanam*,

*Medha, mardavam, Mansa Stheryakaram, Balakaram and Chakshushyam.*<sup>9</sup>

- Daily application of oil to leather, utensil and wheel axis results in strong durable and shockproof properties respectively. Similarly person becomes strong and stout in texture due to *Abhyanga*.<sup>10</sup>

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## OBSERVATION AND RESULTS

- As soon as *Abhyanga* procedure was started patient was responding by calm attention at the time of massage. He remained calm when massage persisted and feels the comfort of *Abhyanga*.

- After two days of treatment excitement was down and irrelevant talk was slightly minimised; still patient complained about attitude of his relatives regarding attention.

- After five to six days patient came with a smile on face and reacts that he was late due to delayed wake up from sleep; at that night he slept comfortably. His evacuation was satisfactory and abdomen was soft. His pulse rate was 80/min with a thick appearance. Blood pressure was recorded as 140/86 mm of Hg.

- As the treatment continued relative sign like dryness of skin was disappeared

with occasional wrinkles and constipation was relieved.

- After eight days there was a significant change in pulse rate and blood pressure. Readings of pulse persists in a range of 80 to 84 /minutes and blood pressure as 140/86 mm of Hg.

- After a span of 10 days irrelevant talks disappeared and relatives had reported that patient retaining deep sleep. Patient was now walking without any support and did not get fatigued.

- After having fifteen days treatment there was no significant relief in colour of eyes as they shows minimal lustre and nails remain thick with slight change in colour.

- Treatment of *Abhyanga* was not significant on signs like tremors of hand and neck; due to irreversible degenerative changes.

## Results

As *Vaatvridhi* is a geriatric unavoidable Physiological change; we can make it tolerable by applying holistic approach of Ayurveda. As *Tila taila* is readily available economic, healthy and non hazardous option; it was selected for *Abhyanga*.

- *Snigdha, Ushna*, properties and potent phenomenon of *Tila taila* like *Balya, Shleshmavardhak*, and *Marutaghna* were proved as a pertinent synergistic weapons to overcome the changes of *Vaatvridhhi*.
- A determined attention to elders, belief on Ayurvedic science and patience results in better outcome. Basic primary manifestations of *Vaatvridhhi* like *Pralaap, Vibandh, Aadhmaan*, dryness of skin and *Nidrabhrunsh* were corrected by *Abhyanga* treatment.



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